

THE DESCENDANTS OF WILLIAM CLARK ANDERSON AND THE “LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION”

by Richard Dell Anderson

(a Descendant of Lavinia (Shannon) Anderson and Humphrey Anderson, son of William Clark Anderson and Cary (Cassandra) (Brashears) Anderson, of Belmont County, Ohio)

Anderson families have been using the **Shannon** name as a first name or a middle name for over 150 years.

Humphrey Anderson (1788-1834), son of **William Clark Anderson** (1744-1810), lived in Belmont County, Ohio. Humphrey met and married **Lavinia Shannon** (1790-1838) in 1810.

Lavinia Shannon was a member of a family which included several statesmen and adventurers.

Lavinia's father, **George Shannon (I)**, came to America in approximately 1759 with his parents. His mother died and was buried at sea during the voyage from Ireland. George (I) was left with an Episcopalian minister by his father after just one year in America. His father returned to Ireland where he subsequently died.

During the Revolutionary War, George enlisted in Captain James Young's company in the Eighth Battalion, Cumberland County (Pennsylvania) Militia. The Militia was commanded by Colonel Abraham Smith.

Shannons Lived at Bedford County, Pennsylvania

The Revolutionary War ended, and George moved to Bedford County, Pennsylvania.¹ In 1783 George married Jane Milligan, and they moved to Washington County, Pennsylvania. Six children were born there: George (II), Thomas, John, Nancy, James, and David. After they moved to Ohio County (later the State of Ohio), Virginia, Lavinia and Arthur were born. Again the Shannons relocated, this time to Belmont County, Ohio. Their son, **Wilson Shannon**, was the first white child born in Warren Township, Belmont County, Ohio.

George Shannon (I) was very outspoken. George died during a snow storm while out hunting. He was the first white man buried in Warren Township. George Shannon (II), Lavinia's brother, was a member of the **Lewis and Clark Expedition**. There are many documented entries about George appearing in writings pertaining to the Lewis and Clark Expedition.²

¹**[Editor's Note:** This is the first recorded instance, even though on the “in law” “side”, of a geographic area “contact” between descendants of Absalom (I) Anderson and the general area, including Bedford County, which includes the “Broad Top” Mountain in Pennsylvania (just North of today's Pennsylvania Turnpike, near Midway) to which **William (IV) Anderson** and others from the Great Fork of the Patuxent River in Maryland's Anne Arundel and Prince George's Counties had also migrated soon after the end of the Revolution.]

²**[Editor's Note:** George Shannon (II) was born in 1787. He was one of the “nine young men from Kentucky” whom **Captain William Clark** enlisted at Louisville on October 19, 1803. He was a brother of **Wilson Shannon**, later **Governor of Ohio**. George Shannon has been described as being mature for his (then) eighteen years and was perhaps the one man in the whole Lewis and Clark Expedition whom either of the two captains might have been most likely to meet at home on terms of social equality. He was the youngest member of the expedition.

Regarded as the “tenderfoot” of the expedition, young Shannon showed a talent for getting lost (including near modern day Yankton, South Dakota). Notwithstanding, young Shannon was selected by the two captains to serve on a court martial, and “Shannon’s Creek”, a tributary of the Yellowstone River in Montana, was named for him by Captain Clark. For further reading about George Shannon (II)’s participation in the Lewis and Clark Expedition, see *PBS Online - Lewis and Clark: Inside the Corps* (<http://www.pbs.org/lewisandclark/inside/gshan.html>); and Verlin B. Anderson, of 809 Dale Avenue, Charlotte N. C. 28216-2503 (a member of The Grassland Foundation, Inc.), *A Paternal History of Andersons in the George Chester Anderson Line.*]

George lost part of a leg due to fighting Indians at Fort Mandan. After finishing the expedition, George studied law and became a lawyer. Later in life, he became a judge in Missouri.

Their Brother was Governor of Ohio

George's and Lavinia's brother, **Wilson Shannon**, studied law, later becoming Governor of Ohio from 1838 to 1840 and again from 1842 to 1844. In 1844 Wilson Shannon resigned as Governor and accepted an appointment from President **John Tyler** as Minister to Mexico. During this time relations with Mexico became strained due to the situation in Texas.

Secretary of State **John C. Calhoun** recalled Wilson in March, 1845. Wilson served in the Ohio legislature from 1853 to 1855. In 1855, President **Franklin Pierce** appointed him **Territorial Governor of Kansas**, where he served until August, 1856.³

William Shannon (George (II) Shannon's son) studied law in Ohio and later settled in Texas. He was a volunteer during the Mexican War. In 1857 he was elected to the Texas House of Representatives. In 1861 he resigned and organized a cavalry unit for the Confederacy. After the Civil War ended, he re-entered politics in Texas until 1886. He then moved to California.

The Clatsop County, Oregon, and Pacific County, Washington Genealogical Societies are presently documenting direct and collateral descendants of the members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.⁴

³**[Editor's Note:** In the text which accompanies *Mathew Brady's Illustrated History of The Civil War* by Benson J. Losing (Portland House Edition), at page 12, it is pointed out that after the disputed Kansas Territorial Legislative Election of 1854 (when 6,000 votes were polled even though there were only 831 legal voters registered), the legislators thus "elected" being all Southern sympathizers, this legislature passed laws in support of slavery in Kansas that were vetoed by the then Territorial Governor, A. H. Reeder, who became so obnoxious that, upon petition, President Pierce recalled Reeder and replaced him with Wilson Shannon, of Ohio, whom Losing describes as an "avowed supporter of slavery". Thus Governor Wilson Shannon served as Territorial Governor of Kansas during the days of the early "Kansas troubles" which preceded the War for Southern Independence, sometimes called the Civil War.]

⁴**[Editor's Note:** Because of the known relationships of one or more families of Andersons from (originally) New Kent and/or Hanover Counties, Virginia, to the family of Meriwether Lewis, of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, plus the fact that Lewis's co-leader was Captain William **Clark** (likewise from Virginia), some (connected to our families) have inquired whether there could (or might) be some "family relationship" between "our" Andersons and those Virginia Andersons above referred to?

The answer seems clearly to be "no". **William Clark Anderson**, of (originally) the Great Fork of the Patuxent River in Anne Arundel County, later of Ijamsville in Frederick County, Maryland, and, finally, one of the pioneer land grant patentees in what is today Southeast Ohio, was one of the two children born to **Absolom (I) Anderson** and his **first** wife, **Mary Clark** (who is a descendant of **Captain Daniel Clark**, a pioneer in the Great Fork). From this first marriage, there was also born to Absolom and Mary a daughter, **Anne**, who married (in Baltimore County) **Denune Howard** (of another old family at the Great Fork of the Patuxent). This Howard couple also moved West. Later Absolom married, as his second wife, **Ann (Wheeler)**, from which second marriage there were numerous children, including a daughter, **Ann Duckett Anderson**, who married **Thomas Hall** (a descendant of **Reverend Henry Hall**, of St. James Church, Tracys Landing, Maryland).

William Clark Anderson married in Frederick County, Maryland, **Cary** (or was her first name really **Cassandra**, since one of their daughters was so named?) **Brashears** (of another old French Huguenot family situate in the Great Fork of the Patuxent in Anne Arundel/Prince George's Counties, Maryland). It is reported that she was born on September 6, 1756, but it is not at this time clear to this editor, who were her Brashears parents? In any event, William Clark Anderson and Cary (Brashears) Anderson were the parents of the following children, at least (not necessarily in order of their respective births): **Humphrey** (who married the above **Lavinia Shannon**), born

July 19, 1788; **William Clark Anderson, Jr.**; **Absolom Anderson**; **Asa Anderson** (see below); **Thomas Anderson**; **Cassandra Anderson** (married **Thomas Shannon**, of Belmont County, Ohio; their son, still another **George Shannon**, died young while serving as private secretary to his uncle, Governor Wilson Shannon); **Elizabeth Anderson** (married **Otho French**, of another old (originally) Anne Arundel County family); and **Dorcas Anderson** (married **David Way**). The marriages of William Clark Anderson's two daughters occurred in Frederick County, Maryland. Many of these families settled later in and around Barnesville in Belmont County, Southeast Ohio. Some of the descendants of the Ways are also descendants of part(s) of the Shipley and other early Anne Arundel County families. In Ohio, and possibly in Frederick County, Maryland, the early French and Way families (and the **Elliott** family of Elliott's Crossroads, Ohio, into which some of their descendants married) were Quakers. Not all of William Clark Anderson's children, or their descendants, "went to Ohio"; some lines remained, and remain, in Frederick County and other places in Maryland and elsewhere. The Methodist cemetery at Hyattstown, Maryland, is where some are interred. Some are listed by name in Volume 8 of Mackenzie's *Colonial Families*. It was Cary (Brashears) Anderson's undoubted Brashears cousin, **Mary Priscilla Brashears** (daughter of **Rezin Brashears** and his wife, **Catherine Shipley**) who married **Robert Anderson**, one of William Clark Anderson's younger half brothers, thereby initiating still another line of Anderson descendants in Frederick County, Maryland. See *The Shipleys of Maryland 1968* (1972 published in Baltimore, Md., by the Shipleys of Maryland), page 386 *et seq.*

The history of the descendants of William Clark Anderson, Sr., and Cary (Brashears) Anderson is quite interesting: As just one example, residing today in North Central Nebraska and/or South Central South Dakota are numerous descendants of one of their sons, Humphrey Anderson and Lavinia (Shannon) Anderson. The following are the reproduced or published genealogies of, or which include, the descendants of just one of Humphrey's great grandsons, **George Marion Anderson**, who was a farmer in the Kirkwood Precinct of Rock County, Nebraska, where he organized and became the first President of the Newport and Mariaville Telephone Company: Elwyn Simons, *A Simons Family History*; Eileen V. Anderson and Evelyn Jerred (twin sisters who are granddaughters of George Marion Anderson), *History of George Marion Anderson Families* (Dec., 1985); and Verlin B. Anderson, of 809 Dale Avenue, Charlotte N. C. 28216-2503, a member of The Grassland Foundation, Inc., *A Paternal History of Andersons in the George Chester Anderson Line* (which "carries" the entire lines or branches of these families "right back" to William (I) Anderson, of Herring Creek, Anne Arundel County, Maryland). Commencing with George Marion Anderson and his wife, in 1918, many in his line converted to, or were raised in, the Assembly of God Church, where several were pastors, evangelists, and/or gospel singers and musicians. They thus "carry on" the religious Puritan traditions of their earliest Anderson ancestors. It is also interesting to note that another huge branch of the total Anderson family, namely, numerous branches of descendants of William (IV) Anderson and Elizabeth (Willett) Anderson, from the "Broad Top" Mountain area near Saxton in Bedford and/or Huntington counties, Pennsylvania, also relocated *circa* the Civil War in Nebraska at Seward County near Omaha. Their "story" is for another day.

Moving from the religious evangelicals to the religious orthodox, to local Anderson descendants (remaining still in Anne Arundel County, Maryland) it is of particular interest that one of the sons of William Clark Anderson, Sr., and Cary (Brashears) Anderson, namely, **Dr. Asa Anderson** (who practiced medicine in what is today the Crofton, Maryland, area) returned to the area of his Anderson grandparents. He was born about 1792, but he returned to the vicinity of the Great Fork of the Patuxent River (see photograph of Dr. Asa Anderson appearing in this issue). He was an early graduate of the University of Maryland Medical School at Baltimore. Following his graduation, he apparently initially resided and practiced medicine in Prince George's County, Maryland, where he married, by Prince George's County, Md., marriage license dated January 3, 1822, **Elizabeth Wells**. Brown, Helen W., *Index of Marriage Licenses Prince George's County, Maryland 1777-1886* (Balto., Md. 1973). He became widowed, and in late 1828 or early 1829, he married, as his second wife, **Eliza Williams** (a descendant of an old family of Welsh origins with branches both in Anne Arundel and Prince George's Counties, Maryland). Eliza's father was **General Osborne Williams** (who had risen through the ranks of the Maryland Militia and who had fought with distinction in both the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812). The father-in-law later became an Associate Circuit Court Judge.

For their wedding trip about January 3, 1829, Dr. and Mrs. Asa Anderson drove by horse and buggy to Ohio to visit his family there. Dr. Anderson managed his farm on Underwood Road near present day Crofton, Maryland, in addition to conducting his medical practice. Later they acquired a second (160 acre) farm that much later became known as the Reidel farm located opposite today's Crofton off of the North side of Davidsonville Road.

Dr. and Mrs. Asa Anderson had one son, **William Osborne Williams Anderson**, who died in 1846 at the

age of twelve years. Double tragedy occurred about nine months later, when Dr. Anderson also passed away at a relative young age. This entire family is interred in the Williams family cemetery lots at St. Stephens P. E. Church at Crownsville, Md. For another thirty years, more or less, his widow continued farming both farms totaling about 460 acres. When she died in 1873, the ownership of both of the two Crofton area farms passed to Mrs. Williams's nephew, **Dr. William G. Williams, Sr.**, who continued a medical practice in the Crofton area, was a Confederate Army doctor during the Civil War, managed both farms, and later became a Delegate in the Maryland House of Delegates. Joseph L. Browne, *From Sotweed to Suburbia A History of the Crofton, Maryland, Area 1660-1960* (Gateway Press, Baltimore, Md., 1985), pgs. 76 and 183-184.

There are one or more persons alive in Anne Arundel County, Maryland, today (including at least one Anderson), who "bear(s)" the first name of "Asa" because some ancestor of theirs, also named "Asa", received his first name, possibly at child birth, in honor of the physician, including possibly while such ancestor's own mother was in labor at such ancestor's birth while being attended by Dr. Asa Anderson (just as was true when, later, at the end of the Civil War, his nephew, Dr. William G. Williams, Sr., attended **Louisa Priscilla (Woodward) Anderson** (Mrs. Absalom (III) Anderson) at the birth of their youngest son and child, **James Williams Anderson**, who, incidentally, also settled near Vermillion, South Dakota).

The Williams family (of which Mrs. Eliza (Williams) Anderson was part) have long had close associations, by way of marriages, with other branches of the Andersons and Anderson descendants. For example, all of the descendants of **Rignal Duckett Woodward**, who are also Anderson descendants, likewise descend from the same Williams family (originally of Prince George's County, Maryland) by virtue of their descent from **Eleanor (Williams) Turner**, a widow, who, on February 17, 1797, married Rignal's father, **Henry Woodward**, of Severn Cross Roads, Millersville, Maryland. *Extract of Diary or Farm Journal of William Anderson of "Grassland"*, fns. 101 and 107, pgs. 94 and 95. There are numerous other Anderson - Williams marriages too numerous for this footnote. Some of them appear on the large family chart of the Anderson family and in the *Diary Extract*.]

The Andersons who are descended from Humphrey and Lavinia (Shannon) Anderson are collateral descendants of the Ohio Governor and his brother, George (II) Shannon. A book is presently in the process of being written and will be published in the near future. The data is being stored at the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Incorporated, Library in Great Falls, Montana. For more information, contact rlawson@stic.net or mail to Sheila Lawson, 18777 Timbercreek Road, Helotes, Texas 78023.